

GUIDANCE FOR PART 2, CHAPTER 16

May 2026

This document provides guidance for Protected Species and Habitat coordination, including agency contact information, other information sources, and a sample letter to the contractor regarding species survey results.

[Offices Responsible for “Section 7” Consultation](#)

[Listed Species Information Sources](#)

[Sample Letter to Contractor on Species Survey](#)

Offices Responsible for “Section 7” Consultation

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Vero Beach

[FDOT Districts 6, 4, 1, 5 (Osceola Co. only)]

Field Supervisor
Ecological Services Field Office
777 37th Street, Suite D-101
Vero Beach, FL 32960
Phone: (352) 448-9151
Fax: (772) 562-4288

<https://www.fws.gov/office/florida-ecological-services>

Panama City (FDOT District 3)

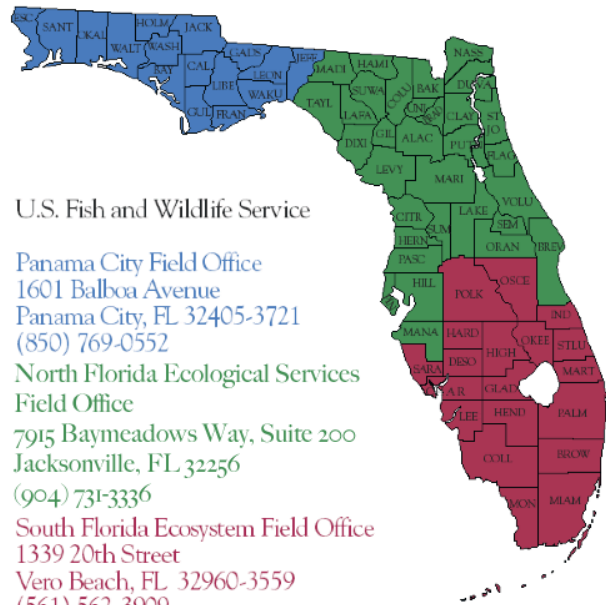
Field Supervisor
Panama City Branch Office
1601 Balboa Avenue
Panama City, FL 32405
Phone: (850) 769-0552
Fax: (850) 763-2177

Jacksonville

[FDOT Districts 2, 5, 7, 1 (Manatee Co. only)]

Jacksonville Branch Office
7915 Baymeadows Way, Suite 200
Jacksonville, FL 32256
Phone: (352) 448-9151
Fax: (904) 731-3045

<https://www.fws.gov/office/florida-ecological-services/visit-us/locations/vero-beach-branch-office>



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Panama City Field Office
1601 Balboa Avenue
Panama City, FL 32405-3721
(850) 769-0552

North Florida Ecological Services
Field Office
7915 Baymeadows Way, Suite 200
Jacksonville, FL 32256
(904) 731-3336

South Florida Ecosystem Field Office
1339 20th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960-3559
(561) 562-3909

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

Please notify your NMFS Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) member of electronic submittal of Section 7 consultation request/packages:

Gulf Coast: (727) 824-5379
Habitat Conservation Division
National Marine Fisheries Service
263 13th Ave. South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Phone: (727) 824-5311

Atlantic Coast: (561) 291-9843
Habitat Conservation Division
Southeast Regional Office
400 N Congress Ave., Suite 270
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
Phone: (561) 440-1333

Listed Species Information Sources

Federally listed species information can be obtained from the following sources:

1) Terrestrial and freshwater species and critical habitat regulated by the **United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)**

- Species Lists and Recovery Plans available online at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/species/recovery-plans.html>
- Federal lists by county:
 - Information, planning, and conservation (IPaC) decision support system at <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>

2) Information on listed marine and anadromous species regulated by the **National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA/NMFS)**

- Florida specific list at http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/protected_resources/section_7/threatened_endangered/index.html
- NMFS Section 7 checklist and accompanying Section 7 checklist procedure at http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/protected_resources/section_7/consultation_submission/index.html
- The following NMFS website provides Action Agency Consultation Package links which contain the guidance for submitting an ESA Section 7 consultation request, effects determination guidance, species and critical habitat lists, consultation tracking in the Public Consultation Tracking System (PCTS), observer lists, emergency consultations, frequently requested biological opinions, and ESA policies, guidance, and regulations: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/protected_resources/section_7/

State listed species lists and additional information can be obtained from the following sources:

1) Animal species regulated by **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)**

- Contact the FWC for most up to date species lists and species action plans. Regional office contact information available at: <http://myfwc.com/about/inside-fwc#DOs>
- Published lists- see **Florida's Endangered and Threatened Species**, Available online at: <https://myfwc.com/media/1945/threatend-endangered-species.pdf>
- View an overview of the FWC's conservation model at: <http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/imperiled>
- Check current listed species profile information on FWC's website: <https://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/profiles/>

2) Plant species regulated by the **Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (FDACS)**

- **Regulated Plant Index FAC Ch5B-40.0055** is available online at:
<https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?title=PRESERVATION%20OF%20NATIVE%20FLORA%20OF%20FLORIDA&ID=5B-40.0055>
- The **Florida Statewide Endangered and Threatened Plant Conservation Program**, administered via the Florida Forest Service, has information at:
http://www.floridaforestservice.com/forest_management/plant_conservation_index.html
- University of South Florida Herbarium website has distribution maps of rare plants in their Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants at:
<http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu>

3) Species lists by County are available from **Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI)**

- County Lists (**County Occurrence Summaries**) online at
<https://www.fnai.org/species-communities/tracking-main>
- Species and Natural Community Summaries

The following is a link to the BA template that may be used to prepare the Listed Species and Habitat section of the NRE:

FHWA: <http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/esawebtool/Site/Template.aspx>

NMFS Pacific Islands:

<http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/Library/PRD/ESA%20Consultation/Final%20Action%20Agency%20Consultation%20Package%20Files%20for%20website%201-12-09/Template%20for%20BA-BE%20-%201-12-09.pdf>

The following organizations/agencies can be contacted for further species-specific information, expert interviews, habitat or GIS data:

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

- Ecological staff at both the District and Central Office levels are experts with specific ecological and transportation experience. Often it is possible to find someone who has dealt with similar projects. Similarly, other states have expert environmental staff which may have similar experience.
- The publication, **Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) Handbook. 1999. Dept. of Transportation Surveying and Mapping. Thematic Mapping Section** can be used to determine land use and existing habitat. It is downloadable at
https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/content/geospatial/documentsandpubs/fluccmanual1999.pdf?sfvrsn=9881b4d0_0

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

620 South Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 488-4676

- Profiles and data for imperiled species available at:
<http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/imperiled/>
- General information for FWC GIS resources available at:
<http://myfwc.com/research/gis/>
- GIS data for fish and wildlife habitat and fish and wildlife species locations:
<https://geodata.myfwc.com/>
- GIS data available for marine listed species and resources:
http://ocean.floridamarine.org/mrgis/Description_Layers_Marine.htm
- GIS data available for freshwater and tidal stream habitats:
<https://geodata.myfwc.com/search?tags=Freshwater%20Ecosystems>

FWC's Wildlife Research Laboratory
1105 S.W. Williston Road
Gainesville, FL 32601
Phone: 386-758-0525
<https://myfwc.com/research/wildlife/>

- A staff of wildlife biologists specializing in wildlife ecology, some with specific transportation-related experience, conduct wildlife research from this facility. Contact individuals for wildlife expertise.

Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI)

1018 Thomasville Road, Suite 200-C
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 224-8207
<http://www.fnai.org/>

- A diverse group of experts that are inventorying Florida's remaining natural areas and wildlife that can be contacted for ecological expertise
- Information available from FNAI includes species lists by county (**County Occurrence Summaries**), descriptions of natural community types (**Natural Communities Inventory**), GIS shapefiles of rare plants, animals, and habitat locations (**Element occurrences**), and information on Florida Managed Areas
- Many of these data can be downloaded from their website at
<https://www.fnai.org/publications/gis-data>
- Available Publications

Florida Water Management Districts

- Regional Florida Water Management Districts or Counties may have **Florida Land Use Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS)** data layers available in GIS shapefiles. More information can be found in the [FLUCC manual.PDF](#) and [Statewide Land Use Land Cover | Florida Department of Environmental Protection Geospatial Open Data.](#)

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
State Conservationist
2614 NW 43rd Street P.O. Box 141510
Gainesville, FL 32614
(352) 338-9500

- Online soil maps and data available via the NRCS Web Soil Survey website at: <http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>
- Hard copies of **NRCS county soil surveys** are listed at: [Soil Surveys by State | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Southeast Region
Division of Endangered Species
1875 Century Blvd., Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30345

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>
<https://www.fws.gov/office/southeast-region-headquarters>

- Jacksonville ES Office contacts: <https://www.fws.gov/office/florida-ecological-services/contact-us>
- Vero Beach ES office contacts: <https://www.fws.gov/office/florida-ecological-services/contact-us>
- Panama City ES Office contacts: <https://www.fws.gov/office/florida-ecological-services/contact-us>

USFWS's National Wetlands Inventory

- GIS data layers for **National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)** are available at: [Wetlands Data | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)

Universities

- Several State Universities have faculty specializing in different areas of biological and ecological sciences: Florida State University (FSU) Biological Sciences and Marine Sciences departments
- The University of Florida (UF) - Wildlife Ecology program: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPICThreatenedandEndangeredSpecies>

Other Online Data and Information Sources

- Nature Serve: <http://www.natureserve.org/>
- Linking Florida's Natural Heritage Database: [PALMM](#)
- FDOT Gopher Tortoise Guidance Document: https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/environment/pubs/protected-species/final-fdot-oem-gopher_tortoise_guidance-exhibitis_9_2_2021.pdf?svrsn=e78798c5_2

Sample Letter to Contractor on Species Survey

(Date)

CPA (Address)

SUBJECT : New Borrow Pit / Mixture Plant /
Construction Field Office (*Name of off-site activity*)
Financial Management Number : XXXXXXXX
Federal-Aid Project Number : XXXXX-XXXX
Section _____, Township _____, Range _____
_____ County, Florida

Mr./Ms. _____:

A field survey was conducted in accordance with Article 7-1.4 of the Florida Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction and in compliance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (amended 1978) and other Wildlife Regulations. No listed species were observed within close proximity of the proposed activities.

It is the opinion of this office that there will be no adverse impacts to federal or state protected, threatened or endangered species, or critical habitat. The contractor may proceed without further action from this office. However, if any federal or state protected, threatened or endangered species are encountered during the course of the activities, please contact our office.

If you have any questions concerning our comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Name
District Environmental Office
Engineer/Manager

cc:
District Materials Engineer
Resident Engineer